

RMT *news*

DOCKLANDS STRIKES!

Essential reading for today's transport worker



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NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD



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Job Description*	Part Time YES NO

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EDITORIAL



DLR STRIKES

Congratulations to Dockland Light Railway members that have stood up to the aggressive and bullying attitude of the new Keolis/Amey management who don't seem to understand the basic principles of industrial relations.

This intransigence has led to the first all-out strike action in the 28 years history of the railway and the company has no-one else to blame but themselves.

Members are furious at the imposition of some of the worst working practices and conditions that we associate with the operations of the most cheapskate and anti-union companies in the transport sector.

In order to get back to normal industrial relations this company needs to change tack and get back round the table or face more of the same.

The DLR ballot registered a massive 92 per cent in favour even surpassing rules within the draconian Trade Union Bill proposed by the Tories which seeks to seriously curtail meaningful workers' rights.

The Bill, which sets a new threshold for strike ballots and allows agency staff to be used to break industrial action, is the biggest attack on unions in a generation.

That is why we have joined with other workers at protests, rallies and a lobby of Parliament to oppose the Bill.

This Tory dogma is also behind the Shaw report into Network Rail which is all about privatisation and cuts that will wreak chaos across our rail infrastructure when what we really need is an end to fragmentation and contracting out.

With surging demand for rail services what is required is an end to the profiteering of the private train companies and the huge sums they are bleeding from the system should be reinvested in infrastructure, fleet and staffing.

The sell-off of the Eurostar state, the

introduction of Driver-Only Operation on northern rail services, the removal of buffet cars on Great Western services and the leaking of LOROL profits overseas are all symptoms of a rail network in crisis caused by privateering.

The recent acquittal of City Link's bosses that brutally dumped thousands out of their jobs on Christmas Day last year is also a bitter blow.

It shows the weakness of UK employment law and will send out a green light to bad bosses the length and breadth of the country to carry on treating their staff like dirt.

RMT will continue to fight for stronger laws, as recommended by the Parliamentary Inquiry into the scandal.

One of the ways to fight this form of callous capitalism is to build strong unions at the workplace and this requires the development of local reps to represent members at work. That is why we have printed the programme for next year at our state-of-the-art education centre in Doncaster, now known as the Bob Crow education centre.

Take the time to look at what is on offer and talk to your branch about taking advantage of one of the excellent courses designed to help you at the workplace where it matters.

Finally, on a personal note, my niece has just lost her husband Philip Carey who passed away at just 31 years old. My thoughts are with Susie and their three little girls, Philips mum and dad, family and friends at this difficult time. It is at times like these that you realise life is precious and we should appreciate those around us.

It also made me think that a trade union is an extension of a family which should be there for workers in good times and bad. So, as this is the last issue of RMT News this year, I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Mick Cash



DOCKLANDS STRIKES

Docklands Light Railway brought to standstill after bullying management refuses to negotiate

Staff across all grades on Keolis Amey Docklands Light Railway took 48-hour strike action in early November following a collapse in industrial relations.

Last ditch talks failed as management refused to address core issues including use of agency staff, imposition without agreement of fundamental changes to control centre management, abuse of procedures and the adoption of a cavalier attitude to risk assessment and the safety and security of staff and the travelling public.

RMT members voted by a massive 92 per cent to also act against a creeping culture of bullying and intimidation of staff, including an abuse of CCTV as well as breaches of agreements, procedures and the recognition framework.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that union negotiators had made every effort resolve the dispute through negotiation but due to the intransigence of DLR management there had been the first ever all-out strike

action in the 28 years history of the railway.

"The responsibility for the disruption is entirely down to the aggressive and bullying attitude of the new KAD management who don't seem to understand the basic principles

of industrial relations.

"Our members on DLR are furious at the way that Keolis/Amey are trying to bulldoze through some of the worst working practices and conditions that we associate with the operations of the most

cheapskate and anti-union companies in the transport sector.

"That anger is reflected in the ballot results. We will not sit back and allow this aggressive and bullying culture to develop on this key part of London's



EUROSTAR SELL-OFF COST TAXPAYERS £2 BILLION

‘Family Silver’ sold off depriving the public of a potential £750 million in dividends in the next decade

The taxpayer has lost a whopping £2 billion from the fire sale of Eurostar, a government audit has revealed.

A National Audit Office report claimed that the sell-off of the government’s 40 per cent stake in the Channel Tunnel operator to a Canadian firm achieved the Treasury’s goal of maximising proceeds.

But the £757 million received fell far short of the £3 billion that the British public invested in Eurostar – and the report said that the timing of the privatisation was dictated by the government’s aim to sell the railway before the election.

“The total taxpayer investment in Eurostar, prior to its incorporation, is significantly

greater than the proceeds generated from this sale.

“The NAO believes that the timing of the sale, agreed in 2014, was primarily driven by the desire to sell prior to the 2015 election,” an NAO statement said.

Commons public accounts committee chair Meg Hillier said that the sale had deprived the public of a potential £750 million in dividends in the next decade.

“Once sold, the family silver can’t be bought back,” she said.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the sale amounted to a “gross rip-off by anyone’s standards”.

“However you dress it up the fire sale of the UK’s Eurostar



stake before the election has cost the taxpayer billions in wasted investment and lost future profits.

“With another £62 billion of our public assets set to be flogged off under this government, the Eurostar fiasco paints a grim picture of profiteering and bargain basement deals that rob the British people.

“Our family silver is being unloaded by the Tories to their friends and backers in the City at knock-down prices in a process driven by a combination

of stupidity, greed and Thatcherite ideology,” he said.

A consultants’ report published recently on the impact of High Speed One (HS1), the new line built to link the Channel Tunnel with St Pancras station in London, found its financial benefits were just half the amount of money it cost.

Labour shadow education secretary Lilian Greenwood called for a new approach to the railways which put passengers first and “leaves the Tories’ ideological opposition to public ownership behind”. ■





FIGHT FOR NORTHERN RAIL SERVICES

Union protests over plans to introduce driver-only operation on Northern and TransPennine Express train franchises

RMT members held a protest in Leeds city centre recently over growing concerns that the government is set to cut job, services and safety on rail services across the north of England.

Ticket office and station office staff were among RMT members demonstrating outside the Queens Hotel hosting this year's National Rail Conference, where Rail Minister Claire Perry spoke.

RMT highlighted concerns about the new Northern and TransPennine Express train franchises, which will be jointly managed by a shadowy group called 'Rail North'.

RMT organiser Craig Johnston said that the

government was planning to award the franchise for operating rail services in the north of England to either the Dutch, French or German state railways.

"The Tories are handing the north of England's railways over to the Germans, Dutch or French state railways so that those people can make profits.

"They are also proposing specifications in the franchise that will bring in less safe and less customer friendly driver operated only trains and potential cuts to station staff and ticket offices.

"We are calling on Labour councillors who are part of Rail North to oppose the government's franchise

specifications and to actively fight the specifications in the franchises and to campaign for rail services, rail safety and rail jobs across the north of England," he said.

A Department for Transport spokeswoman claimed that "giving driver's responsibility for opening and closing doors frees up on-board staff to provide the high level of customer service that passengers deserve".

Councillors from Leeds City Council are among members of Rail North, which is made up of northern local authorities charged with overseeing future rail franchises in the north of England

Among the speakers at the

conference were former Tory transport minister Steven Norris who held a number of leading positions with private rail contractor Jarvis which was maintaining the track when the tragic rail disaster at Potters Bar occurred in 2002 killing seven people.

Jarvis immediately blamed the tragedy on sabotage, a charge the HSE later declared to be completely unfounded and blamed faulty maintenance.

A year later Network Rail took all track maintenance in-house, ending the use of private contractors except for large-scale renewal or development projects.



LEICESTER COUNCIL SCAPEGOATING TAXI DRIVERS

RMT is fighting the introduction by Leicester Council of a new system of penalty points targeted at taxi drivers.

There are already pre-existing sanctions in place for taxi drivers if they misbehave or commit any offence. Drivers who break the law are investigated by the Council's Licensing team and if there is a case to answer, are brought in front of the Licensing Committee - so the necessity for a further tier of bureaucratic intervention in the trade is unclear.

Following the obscene criminal behaviour of some rogue minicab drivers in Rotherham, it is understandable that the sector is being subjected to greater scrutiny. However, lumping all UK taxi drivers, who typically drive full-time as a vocation and are fully vetted on an on-going basis, in with casual minicab drivers is the

wrong way to deal with the issue.

Politicians at Leicester Council are keen to be seen to be taking action to regulate the sector. However, menacing registered and established taxi drivers, and threatening to cut off their livelihood for petty parking infractions, is not the way to achieve the Council's stated aims. In fact it is likely to have the opposite effect and will encourage the growth of casual, unsafe minicabs.

Taxi drivers in Leicester are already being squeezed by corporate greed - with the operator of Leicester station East Midlands Trains charging drivers annually hundreds of pounds each just to pick up passengers from the station. RMT believes that Councils across the country are also now looking at new ways of skimming off taxi drivers' tight revenues in a typical display of the new local

government funding model.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said: "RMT is deeply concerned that taxi drivers are being unfairly scapegoated and that rising intolerance and xenophobia explains some of the new schemes being devised to harass and extract fees from them.

"Rather than facilitate a properly functioning public taxi service, authorities are dreaming up new ways to crack down on drivers.

"Leicester taxi drivers are united in their need to take a stand. As part of the campaign against Leicester council's proposals, RMT will be talking with passengers and politicians and organising a series of protests.

"These 'go slows' which will take place over the coming weeks, will be designed to raise awareness of the treatment of taxi drivers and force the Council to think again".

ARRIVA TRAINS WALES STRIKE SUSPENDED

Train driving staff on Arriva Trains Wales suspended 48-hour strike action after last minute talks.

The key issue was the unwillingness of ATW to table an adequate pay offer despite RMT and ASLEF postponing previous strike action to allow

for further meaningful discussions to take place.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that important progress had been made and both unions agreed to suspend the strike action and members have been instructed to work normally.



RMT members join mass rallies and protests against the Tories draconian Trade Union Bill which seeks to seriously curtail workers' rights

The Tory government has been warned by trade unionists and councils across the country that their Trade Union Bill risks setting industrial relations back decades.

The Bill, which sets a new threshold for strike ballots and allows agency staff to be used to break industrial action is the biggest attack on unions in a generation.

New restrictions would be imposed on picketing and the posting of information on social media during industrial disputes, while 50 per cent of union members eligible to vote would have to take part in a ballot for the outcome to be lawful.

RMT members have joined firefighters, nurses, civil servants, postal workers and other workers at protests, rallies and a lobby of Parliament to oppose the Bill.

Union leaders told a recent Westminster rally that pay rises, decent working conditions and health and safety measures would not have happened

without the right to take strike action.

Communication Workers Union Dave Ward said that the Bill was more "vicious" than anything introduced by Margaret Thatcher and was designed to stop unions defending workers, jobs and conditions.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash pointed out that even Tory MPs like David Davis was comparing parts of the bill with fascist regimes.

"When even Tory MPs are comparing the Trade Union Bill to something out of Franco's fascist Spain we know we are facing the fight of our lives and the TUC has agreed a united, detailed and militant strategy that can defeat this assault on workplace rights," he said.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady told the government: "Don't you dare think you can get away attacking our fundamental right to strike. Just like tax credits, you had better think again.

"This Bill is both undemocratic and a threat to public safety. How can it be fair to fine unions up to £20,000 if they don't give two weeks' notice about what they are going to put on Twitter and Facebook during a strike?

"And how can it be safe to allow untrained agency workers to be used to break strikes?" she said.

OPPOSITION

Some of Britain's most powerful local authorities, representing millions of people across northern England, have attacked the government's controversial Trade Union Bill as something which will damage existing relations between workers and employers.

The Bill has already been widely condemned by human rights organisations as a major threat to civil liberties in Britain.

Under the proposals, picket line supervisors would also be forced to wear armbands, have

letters of authorisation at all times, and be forced to give their contact details to the police.

Now the heads of some of the biggest local authorities in the country have joined the mounting opposition to the Bill, which they say is at odds with moves by the government to devolve greater power to northern cities and regions.

In an open letter, leaders state: "Taking on more responsibility for improving public services and growing our local economies means working in partnership with our communities and our workforce – in ways that are right for the areas we represent.

"So we fail to understand why the government wishes to tell us how we manage relationships with the unions that represent our employees," it said.

The letter is signed by the heads of combined authorities in the North-east, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire,

Liverpool City and Sheffield City.

“Good employment relations are essential for high-quality public services,” it stated.

This intervention comes amid mounting opposition to the government’s proposals to place greater restrictions over workers.

Every local authority in Scotland is set to ignore the Bill and in Wales, First Minister Carwyn Jones recently pledged to oppose the Bill if it is passed.

Even the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, which represents the UK’s employment agencies, is “not convinced that putting agencies and temporary workers into the middle of difficult industrial relations situations is a good idea for agencies, workers or their clients.”

The government’s own bureaucracy watchdog, the Regulatory Policy Committee, has described the impact assessments accompanying the draft Bill as “not fit for purpose”, with “little evidence presented of any significant benefits”.

WOMEN

The worst legislation in the bill is reserved for those working in ‘important’ public services. Workers in these sectors will see the ways they pay union fees stopped. The time they can spend negotiating with employers will be restricted and to go on strike they will have to achieve levels of votes far above the level received by most governments.

TUC data reveals that almost three quarters of the union members affected by those most oppressive rules are women. This is because public services are largely made up of women.

BIS figures show they make up 67 per cent of public sector workers, 79 per cent of healthcare workers and 72 per cent of education workers.

For those women, with strikes made less likely and less powerful, their leverage to prevent unequal pay, discrimination and protect maternity and other rights will be dramatically reduced. ■

Parliamentary column



TORY LONDON PROPERTY GAMBLE

The Tories forced the Transport for London Bill through Parliament earlier this month with a three line whip – a rare occurrence for a private bill.

This bill is designed to help TfL fill the funding gap arising from impending cuts in the grant it receives from central government, by allowing it to use offshore companies to develop its property.

This possibly explains why the government wanted it out of Parliament as it relates to funding and budgets.

Leaks show that, from the turn of the decade, the government will cut £700 million a year from its contribution to TfL’s budget.

As a result TfL is jumping head first into the worst kind of corporate structures – ie Limited Partnerships. This model is operated via opaque offshore investment vehicles that pay little tax and are magnets for crooks from around the world engaged in stealing money from their own public purses.

TfL is pinning all its hopes on filling the gap created by government budget cuts by leasing out land to offshore companies. TfL should not have been put in this position by the government – the organisation is struggling to run a transport network let alone a property portfolio.

Their press office spins this as TfL’s contribution to tackling the housing crisis but the union and the Labour front bench says that it is nothing of the kind.

Even if Transport for London were to allow the building of giant residential towers above every one of its stations, the

cost of housing in the capital will remain unaffordable.

While the provision of vital services such as housing continues to be dominated by corporate interests, the chief winners will remain the financiers. With ordinary working people left competing against each to see how much money they can borrow for ever more miniscule and remote dwellings.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that TfL needed to be saved from itself and from a government indifferent to the growing financial crisis facing services in the capital as we saw from the recent transport department funding settlement.

“Speculative property gambles benefit global finance capital and opening the door to a barrage of dirty money and the warehousing of residential units that turn whole areas into ghost towns. TfL should have no part of that

“TfL needs to be properly funded by government and not encouraged to gamble its financial future and the safe provision of transport services on shady property deals straight out of gangster movies like *The Long Good Friday*,” he said.

The bill will now go back to Report stage and Third Reading where amendments can be considered

The union has met with Labour Hammersmith MP Andy Slaughter about the possibility of drawing on a bigger pool Labour MPs to continue opposing this charter for developers to make millions from public property.



LONDON OVERGROUND PROFITS SUBSIDISE FARES IN HONG KONG AND BERLIN

Profits made by London Overground services could be used to cut fares for passengers by 6.5 per cent a year on average but are instead subsidising rail services in Hong Kong and Berlin, according to RMT research.

The report, released eight years after the start of London Overground operations, warns that foreign railways will continue to profit at the expense of London passengers as all the bidders for the next London Overground contract are owned by French or German state railways, Hong Railway and a Singapore based Transport Group

MPs have tabled early day motion 696 stating that

although London Overground is portrayed as public rail services this “masks the reality that London Overground is in fact a private rail franchise jointly operated by subsidiaries of Hong Kong and German state railways”.

The MPs say they are “dismayed could have been used to fund an average year on year fare cut of 6.5 per cent for Londoners but instead are ultimately being used to support the railways of Berlin and Hong Kong.”

They also support union demand for “London Passengers to be put before profit by allowing London Overground services to be operated directly in public ownership”.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that there had been a deliberate and cynical attempt by the London Mayor and others to try and paint London Overground as part of the publicly-owned Transport for London operation when it was nothing more than another private franchise used as a cash-cow by the German and Hong Kong state railways to subsidise their fares.

“Instead of meekly accepting this situation Transport for London should be standing up for London Passengers and exploring all options for running these services in public ownership including any legislative powers it needs.

“This is especially the case

when passengers are about to be told of even more cuts to Transport for London’s budget in the forthcoming Comprehensible Spending Review.

“Clearly, if London Overground was publicly owned there would be scope to slash fares by 6.5 per cent a year rather than seeing that money shipped to Berlin and Hong Kong to prop up their rail operations.

“RMT and our Parliamentary Group will continue to fight for that publicly owned option for our railways as an alternative to the cash-laden rip off that the British people have been lumped with for the past two decades,” he said. ■

LONDON OVERGROUND MYTHS AND REALTIES

London Overground Ltd was launched in November 2007. With its London Transport branding it is often portrayed as a public railway.

This masks the reality that London Overground is in fact a type of rail franchise known as a concession and is jointly operated by Arriva who are owned by German State Railways and MTR who are owned by Hong Kong Railways.

Between them these companies are paid 10 per cent of all London Overground's Passenger Income. This income has been used to support dividend payments which instead could have been used to fund a average 6.5 per cent year on year fare cut. See table below.

All figure in £m	Passenger Income (PI)	P.I. (Private share 10% of)	Dividend (31 March)	Dividend as % of P.I.
2013-14	£149	£14.90	£4.60	3.09
2012-13	£125	£12.50	£8.80	7.04
2011-12	£93	£9.30	£8.50	9.14
				6.5% average

This siphoning off of funds to foreign railways is set to continue as the shortlisted bidders for the next contract due to begin in November are all foreign owned as shown below.

Arriva Rail London Ltd (Deutsche Bahn);

LoKeGo Ltd (51:49 joint venture of Keolis (UK) Ltd and Go-Ahead Holding Ltd);

Metroliner Rail Ltd (owned by Singapore-based transport group ComfortDelGro);

MTR Corp (Hong Kong)

EARLY DAY MOTION

"That this house notes that London Overground rail services are portrayed as public rail services run by Transport for London; is concerned however that this masks the reality that London Overground is in fact a private rail franchise jointly operated by subsidiaries of Hong Kong and German state railways who have ensured that almost £22 million of their share of revenue has been paid out in dividends between 2011 and 2014; is dismayed that these profits could have been used to fund a average year on year fare cut of 6.5% for Londoners but instead are ultimately being used to support the railways of Berlin and Hong Kong; is deeply concerned that Londoner's subsidising foreign railways are set to continue as the only bidders for next London Overground contract are subsidiaries of French, German, Hong Kong and Singapore railways; and calls for London passengers to be put before profit by allowing London Overground services to be operated directly in public ownership."

Tabled by Gareth Thomas Labour MP for Harrow West

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DEALING WITH THE OFFSHORE CRISIS

RMT has raised the continuing threats to jobs, maintenance, skills and safety in the offshore energy sector in evidence submission to the Department for Energy and Climate Change.

The union submitted documentation that confronts the Oil and Gas Authority head on with a wide range of issues that the union believes threaten the long term security of the UK's oil and gas industry and the jobs that it supports.

This includes the clearance of safety critical maintenance backlogs continues to be

neglected by industry and threatens long term sustainable recovery of North Sea reserves.

As a result the OGA will struggle to revitalise exploration if the industry continues to haemorrhage jobs and skills, as well as undermining collective bargaining agreements such as the Offshore Divers Industry Agreement.

The offshore skills base is under serious threat from the way maximising economic recovery is being interpreted and the OGA must influence commercial behaviour in the offshore industry to protect the domestic skills base.

OGA should also be represented on the industry body currently being set up to

oversee the introduction of the EU Offshore Safety Directive.

It must challenge practices in the offshore supply chain such as social dumping on offshore supply and decommissioning vessels, if it is to affect changes to the culture and commercial behaviour of offshore oil and gas companies in order to maximise sustainable economic recovery.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that MPs on the DECC Select Committee needed to tell the OGA to get a grip on the offshore sector's sub-standard safety performance which threatens the future sustainability of North Sea production.

"The OGA also need to spell out their plans to change the culture and commercial behaviour of oil and gas companies, contractors and the offshore supply chain.

"It is essential that these plans recognise the importance of protecting the local and

national skills base in maximising sustainable economic recovery from the UK Continental Shelf," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that UK workers in the offshore sector and the supply chain were being hounded out of jobs by employers who are exploiting the low oil price to permanently cut labour costs. T

"This practice, unless halted by the commercial regulator, will be terminal for the UK's offshore and supply chain skills base, with the economic benefit to the UK of the remaining North Sea resources effectively siphoned off into the pockets of private shareholders across the world, with UK workers and the taxpayers being stiffed once again.

"The OGA need to take tough decisions that will not be popular with the oil and gas industry or their supporters in the Tory government, if we stand any chance of retaining skills and maximising economic recovery in the North Sea basin," he said. ■



EDUCATE AGITATE ORGANISE

RMT education officer Andy Gilchrist outlines the courses on offer next year and urges members to sign up

The Bob Crow national education centre has launched next year's education programme on offer to the many reps, activists and officials.

These are set out on the two calendars set out overleaf. The application form for courses are available on the RMT website.

The programme sets out to provide a comprehensive range of education and training for our unions reps as well as a programme that offers a diverse range of courses to assist our workplace reps and officials to support, advise and represent members.

All courses are accredited through our partnership work with Northern College. The college is able to provide support and advice to our education programme from a team of trade union professionals with many years of experience in education.

Despite Tory attacks on trade union provision, RMT has been able to further develop its programme and offer an enhanced award system for those members completing courses at Doncaster including a certificate and advanced certificate in RMT Trade Union Studies.

The new enhanced accredited programme is a credit to the union and all those involved should be very proud of their contribution towards this further step forward.

Courses are open to all members, but whilst it is hoped they are enjoyable and interesting, they are designed and funded to lead to the practical involvement back in the workplace and the branches representing members and building organising of a stronger and more effective union.

All the courses set out for delivery in Doncaster can also

be organised and delivered locally, which may assist many members. Regional Councils are urged to develop regional education plans for next year with the union meeting the costs.

If you want to take up any of the opportunities that this programme offers then send your completed application online, or by post. If you need any further information about the centre, courses or trade union education in general then contact the RMT education officer at a.gilchrist@rmt.org.uk or on 07584172705.

COURSE PLANNER 2016 - ROOM 1

	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
JAN							B/HOL			as at 20th October 2015							WORKPLA	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
FEB			BRANCH OFFICIAL - LEVEL 1							WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 3							WORKPLA	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
MAR				WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1					POLITICAL SCHOOL								WORKPLA	
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
APR							CLOSED										BRANCH C	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
MAY			B/HOL	CLOSED						ULR STAGE 1							AREA	
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
JUN					CLOSED					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2							WORKPLA	
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
JUL							WPR1										WORKPLA	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AUG			WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2							BRANCH OFFICIALS - LEVEL 1							WORKPLA	
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
SEPT						CLOSED				WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2							WORKPLA	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
OCT										WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1						POLITICAL SCH		
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
NOV				WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2						BRANCH OFFICIALS - LEVEL 2							WORKPLA	
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
DEC						WRKP - LEVEL 1				WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2								

WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
FACE REPS - LEVEL 1					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2							WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29						
FACE REPS - LEVEL 2					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1													
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
FACE REPS - LEVEL 2					CLOSED				B/HOL			B/HOL	CLOSED					
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
OFFICIALS - LEVEL 2					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1							WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					
COUNCIL REPS					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 3							B/HOL	CLOSED					
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
FACE REPS - LEVEL 1												WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
FACE REPS - LEVEL 1					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 2							WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
FACE REPS - LEVEL 3					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1							B/HOL	CLOSED					
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
FACE REPS - LEVEL 1					AREA COUNCIL REPS							WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
SCHOOL					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1							WRKP 2						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				
FACE REPS - LEVEL 1					WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 3							WORKPLACE REPS - LEVEL 1						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
					CLOSED							B/HOL		CLOSED				

COURSE PLANNER 2016 - ROOM 2

	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
JAN							B/HOL			as at 20th October 2015							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 1 (1)	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
FEB			HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 1 (1)							MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (1)	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
MAR				HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 2 (1)						PROJECT MANAGEMENT							ADVANCED PART 3	
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
APR										HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (1)							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (1)	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
MAY			B/HOL	CLOSED						HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 1 (3)							EQUA	
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
JUN					CLOSED					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 1 (4)							AUTISM IN	
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
JUL							PENSIO N			HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 2 (3)							ADVANCE Part 3,	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AUG			HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (4)							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 1 (5)							UL	
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
SEPT						CLOSED				MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (1)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
OCT			ULR STAGE 1							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 1 (6)							UL	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
NOV				PENSIONS - 5 DAYS						CANCER AWARENESS IN THE WORKPLACE							EQUA	
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
DEC						LEAD ULR COURSE				HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 2 (6)								

WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 1 (1)					ADVANCED RMT CERTIFICATE Part 1, Representation.							AUTISM IN THE WORKPLACE						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29						
HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 1 (2)					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 1 (2)							H&S 1, PART 2						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
ADVANCED RMT CERTIFICATE Part 2, Organising					CLOSED				B/HOL			B/HOL	CLOSED					
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (2)					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 2 (2)							CANCER AWARENESS IN THE WORKPLACE						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					
QUALITY AT WORK					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 1 (3)							B/HOL	CLOSED					
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
AUTISM IN THE WORKPLACE					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 1 (4)							PENSIONS - 5 DAYS						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
ADVANCED RMT CERTIFICATE Communications					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 1 (5)							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (3)						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
ULR STAGE 2					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 2 (4)							B/HOL	CLOSED					
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (5)					ADVANCED RMT CERTIFICATE Part 4, Campaigning.							HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 1 (6)						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
ULR STAGE 2					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 1, PART 2 (5)							PENSIONS						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				
QUALITY AT WORK					HEALTH & SAFETY STAGE 2, PART 2 (6)							LEAD ULR COURSE						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
					CLOSED							B/HOL		CLOSED				

FOR A PEOPLE'S POST

Communication Workers Union general secretary Dave Ward agrees with RMT – privatisation must go

I am delighted to write for *RMT News* as my union fully supports your campaign to renationalise the rail industry.

Both our unions are now well versed in the perils of privatisation. The impact is clearly further down the line with the rail industry with sky high ticket prices being matched only by massive dividends to shareholders.

RMT and others have shown beyond any doubt that the case for publicly-owned train operators makes sense for every single stakeholder – perhaps with the exception of those who are currently creaming off extortionate profits.

The railways like the post are not only part of the infrastructure but also the social fabric of our country. With this in mind, the CWU launched a campaign in July – The People's Post. Since then we have received tremendous media coverage, public support with over 8,000 people turning up to a People's Post rally in Manchester and we have trended on social media several

times.

The sale of Royal Mail was a national outrage. The billions of pounds that went into the pockets of speculators and hedgefundors could have built schools, hospitals and railways. As we have seen though with the Trade Union Bill and tax credits, this is a government that acts on ideology and in the interests of the few.

Despite this, postal workers and the CWU are defiant in the protection of our jobs and industry. We have a very simple view. The ownership of the company may have changed but the service remains and always will be the People's Post.

The People's Post has some very specific aims including calling for a future Labour government to renationalise Royal Mail, new legislation to protect the daily delivery, a real living wage across the postal industry and a total overhaul of the regulator.

The next steps for our campaign are crucial. We plan to continue our nationwide tour by visiting Birmingham in



February. Prior to that, we are planning for National Postal Workers Day on Monday December 14. This day will highlight the key aims of the People's Post campaign but we also want to promote the role that postal workers play in every community in the UK. The CWU are looking to the future. We want Royal Mail to be at the heart of every city, town and village offering a range of services fit for a modern environment.

DECEMBER 14

On December 14 we have organised a wide range of public events and have secured extensive media coverage. You can help us by joining in the debate on social media using #PeoplesPost and sharing a petition which we will launch on the day.

The challenges that lay ahead for us all are huge – our own

industry disputes, dealing with the Trade Union Bill and the changing political landscape. My view is that we will only face up to these challenges by standing together. This is why the CWU is calling on the TUC to name a day of action and protest across the movement against the Trade Union Bill. We are dealing with a government that bullies and intimidates any opposition. The only way to deal with a bully is to stand up to them – that is what the trade union movement must do.

Finally, the CWU had a recent dispute in Plymouth where members took strike action as a result of management introducing casual workers without agreement. Following their return to work, RMT general secretary Mick Cash sent those CWU members a letter of support. I would like to thank Mick and your union for this gesture of solidarity. ■

SERCO CALEDONIAN SLEEPER BALLOT

Union warns Scottish government that 'specialists in failure' Serco is ignoring health and safety warnings

RMT members on the Caledonian Sleeper are being balloted for strike action in a dispute with new operator Serco.

Despite several meetings between RMT negotiators and senior company management over the last few months

The union has been forced into the ballot over the company's failure to address the number of defects contained within the rolling stock despite numerous meetings with management.

Some of the defects are

potentially dangerous to the staff on board and the travelling public who are paying top dollar prices for a service which is unreliable, increasingly uncomfortable and riddled with health, safety and welfare issues.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that the poor service to passengers, in conjunction with the company's failure to address the issues raised by the union over several months, had now reached the point of proceeding to ballot for industrial action before someone

was injured.

"The sleeper franchise was awarded to Serco by the Scottish government and the multi-national privateer took over from First Group on March 31st this year.

"Our members have been unhappy with Serco's management of the iconic service from Scotland to London since the very early days of them taking on this fifteen year franchise.

"This is yet another example of Serco winning public sector contracts and failing to deliver for the tax payer, passengers and staff".

He went on to say Serco's failings to run a rail service should be a wake-up call to the Scottish government in advance of the announcement of the

winner of the lifeline ferry service on Scotland's west coast currently delivered by the public sector through Calmac ferries.

"The Scottish government must pay heed to the warnings from RMT and opposition politicians about the broken promises from Serco on their deliverance of public transport and ensure the announcement regarding the award of the Clyde and Hebridean Ferry Service is made in advance of the Scottish parliamentary elections next May.

"Serco is a company who are specialists in failure when it comes to public sector contracts and RMT has no intention of allowing them to get away with compromising the safety of staff and passengers on the sleeper service," he said. ■

NORTHERN RAIL LEEDS STAFF TO TAKE FURTHER STRIKE ACTION

A photograph of a blue Northern Rail train. The word 'northern' is written in white lowercase letters on the side of the train. Below it, in smaller white text, it says 'a serco and abellio joint venture'. The background is slightly blurred, showing the train's structure and some greenery.

Customer relations members at Leeds have been in dispute with Northern Rail since August over a job evaluation of jobs in their department which led to an unacceptable downgrading from a CO4 to a CO2 grade.

Staff have already taken two days of action in October and November and further strike dates are planned for Christmas

Eve and January 4.

Members were appalled by the outcome of the review as well as management's refusal to reconsider their decision.

An incredible 95 per cent vote in favour of taking industrial action and the union is demanding that the downgrading of existing employees should be withdrawn.

The union is also demanding that the two evaluation processes be set aside and that no changes are made to the duties of those carrying out Customer Relation Officer Roles at CO5.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said that members at Leeds were to be applauded for their solidarity and determination and

their rock solid.

"Our members at Leeds deserve nothing less than our full support in their fight to defend their grade," he said.

The current Northern Rail franchise run by Serco and Abellio will end in February since beginning operation in 2004 and the new operator will be announced next month. ■



FIFE FIGHTS CUTS

RMT member Brian Reynolds reports on a People's Assembly (Scotland) and anti-cuts gala

Over 500 people marched through the streets of Dunfermline to attend the People's Assembly Rally at the city's Pittencreeff Park.

Organisations that were represented included UNITE, UNISON, RMT, EIS, Fife TUC, Dunfermline and Glenrothes Labour Parties, the SNP, the Communist Party, RISE, Solidarity and Mrs Barbour's Army, along with the NUM Dysart branch.

Chairing the event, Mary Lockhart praised the level of unity among local organisations

to defeat the Tories.

She emphasised that the Conservatives continued to divide the working class by using poverty as a political weapon.

"They want to strike fear and insecurity to paralyse working people but they will not succeed.

"The People's Assembly will demonstrate that the Tories are the real threat to our National Security," she said to loud applause.

RMT political officer Phil McGarry spoke on behalf of the

People's Assembly in Scotland.

He reminded us that austerity began in 2010 and had gone from bad to worse since the Tories got elected in May.

"They have embarked upon the most vicious attacks on the old, the young, the Infirm and the working poor in our society.

"Their hated Bedroom Tax, wage freezes, zero hour contracts, welfare cuts, together with the sanctions regime on the unemployed over 1million people and their families now depend on food banks.

"This is a class war whereby

the rich get tax cuts, reductions in inheritance tax as well as the government refusing to close tax loop holes used by transnational corporations which allows them to move profits into tax havens and offshore accounts thus avoiding Corporation Tax.

"At the same time the unemployed are demonised and reductions in Tax Credits will force people and families into deeper poverty.

"It is now estimated some 2.7million people will lose up to £3,000 and it is an outrage that

pensioners and others were now having to choose whether to 'eat or heat' arising out of the greedy excesses of the major energy companies who continued to rip us all off.

"It is time to re-nationalise them along with British Telecom, the Post Office and Royal Mail and the rail network," he said to cheers.

- The People's Assembly in Scotland calls for:
- Paying the Living Wage irrespective of age
- End Wage Restraint
- No more outsourcing of our NHS contracts
- End Competitive Tendering
- No interference in Collective Bargaining
- An end to rail privatisation
- Support CalMac kept in public ownership

Phil reminded the crowd of the need to campaign for the repeal of Thatcher's anti-union laws and to oppose the latest attacks contained in the Trade Union Bill.

"This latest proposed Bill is the most vicious and vindictive proposal ever written and Cameron and his cronies have no mandate to bring this forward in Scotland and is totally illegal under the Human Rights Act and the ILO Convention, Articles 86, 87 and 98," he said.

He said that the Human Rights Act was clearly enshrined in the "Scotland Act" and he called upon the First Minister to oppose this Bill in Scotland. He warned that RMT would defy these draconian laws.

"It is our right to organise, agitate, and educate and represent our members without government restrictions or interference," he said.

It was great to see RMT members participating and waving our flags, a great day out was had by all. ■

President's column



THE LAST POST

Well my three years are almost up and it is amazing how fast it has gone.

It seems just a brief moment since I wrote my first column and said that I was in your hands. Of course an awful lot has happened in those three years, lots of good things but also some terrible things.

However, RMT is still strong, still growing and still punching well above our weight. Many unions would wish they were as well organised as us. This is down to you, the members. You are the most important part of this great union.

People ask me if I am sorry to be going and of course I am, but it is right that I move in. Our union should be proud that the leadership is made up of lay members that return to work when their time is up.

They need to be back amongst the rank and file and passing on their experiences. Although it is sad for me, I always knew this day would come. It is different for full time officers who have to stand for election every five years – at least I am spared going through another election!

I consider myself lucky and privileged to have served as your president. This is a position that has enabled me to meet wonderful people across Britain and the world. The thing that has struck me most about this is that wherever I have gone they all face the same troubles as us.

Workers everywhere are facing austerity, attacks on their conditions and increasing privatisation. This proves that our real enemy is the capitalist system and it is imperative that we keep our international contacts to fight it. Now more than ever we should stand shoulder to shoulder with them. We live in a shrinking world where fewer and fewer companies control everything and every worker's struggle is our struggle.

The tragic early death of Bob Crow has to be the lowest point in my presidency. This was a terrible

blow, not only to our union, but the whole trade union movement and progressive movements everywhere.

I miss him very much both as a friend and as an inspiration. We have been able to carry on because of the great legacy that he has left us. I want to pay tribute to all members and staff who worked so hard above and beyond the call of duty to keep our union together during that terrible time.

I mustn't forget two other good friends who died in office while I was president. The first was John MacDonald, Relief Regional Organiser for the north. He was a brilliant organiser and if I had ever been in trouble, John was the man I would want to represent me.

The second was Brian Munro, Council of Executive member for London Transport. Brian was a young man who was taken far too early. He stood for the Council of Executives several times and it was a great sadness to me that when he finally got elected he was to serve for such a short time. But what a time, he crammed so much work for the membership into those seven months. Both John and Brian battled their illnesses right to the end with great bravery.

Although we all mourn our three comrades and all others both within our union and other warriors in the battle for a more equal society, foremost in our minds must be the families.

Finally, I would like to thank all the EC members and officers who worked alongside me, and all office staff. The kindness and support of everyone I met, some only for a fleeting moment, I will never forget as long as I live.

The union is in good hands, and as long as we remain true to ourselves and our beliefs, we will continue to be at the forefront of the struggle.

Solidarity, thanks and best wishes to all of you, comrades in deed.

Peter Pinkney

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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



RUGBY SAFETY MAN HONoured

RMT activist and safety specialist Adrian Fricker wins prestigious Rail Safety Person of the Year



Adrian Fricker, safety improvement specialist, has won the Rail Safety Person of the Year award for his work with Track Safety Alliance (TSA).

TSA is an industry wide group which was formed in 2011, to allow a number of concerned stakeholders across the industry to develop and share best practice. This is largely focussed on the improvement of health, safety and wellbeing of track workers.

Adrian works very closely with RMT health and safety reps within IP – Track Renewals.

“We have now run four Close Call champion behaviour training courses, which has encouraged nearly 200 champions to challenge unsafe behaviours and unsafe conditions, giving them the skills on how effective challenge is key.

“They can then pass on the skills they have learned across the rail industry.

“We organise staff reps conferences for frontline workers and supervisory and technical forums for the managerial side.

“These are reflected across

the Track Renewals principal contractors and Labour supply companies recent key themes have covered fatigue, working at height, occupational health, behaviour and Close Calls, welfare and PPE to mental health wellbeing and isolations.

“During the forums, we ask for feedback about best practices that we can share with other colleagues around the organisation,” he said.

He has also been instrumental in the development of the TSA website.

Network Rail scheme project manager Paula Marshall said that Adrian had set up forums that has allowed over 1,500 front line and technical staff as well as contractors to openly debate and discuss safety issues.

“As a result a veritable harvest of good ideas and best practice is finding its way into agreed safety protocols within the rail industry.

“Under Adrian’s leadership, the TSA has led a number of design and development safety initiatives including fatigue surveys, supplying track workers with hot and cold drinks and a nominated driver

scheme.

“Adrian also ran the first TSA safety improvement suggestion scheme which awarded cash prizes to track workers who came up with practical ideas,” she said.

Adrian is an S&T engineer by trade and lives in Rugby where he is the local RMT branch chair as well as being involved with the RMT/NUR welfare committee.

Paula Marshall said that Adrian’s enthusiasm and passion for the job was never-ending.

“He is a relentless advocate of safety and is a tireless in getting colleagues involved.

“He has been known to undertake numerous middle-of-the-night site visits getting alongside inexperienced staff, displaying the same knowledge, good humour and passion to challenge unsafe behaviours,” she said.

On the night at the awards ceremony, Adrian said: “To be nominated is really humbling and when you walk from the back of the room through all the people and everyone is clapping, it’s quite moving, winning is an Honour,” he said.



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RMT NEWS

Cancer diagnosis can cost families £570 a month*

More than 37,000† women under 75 contract breast cancer in the UK every year, and although 78% will now survive for ten years or more, four out of five will be on average £570 pounds worse off.* And every one of those diagnosed is someone's partner, sister, daughter or mother - this affects all their families too.

The good news is that survival rates are higher than ever - the bad news is that fighting the disease can be expensive, and that can cause serious money worries at a very stressful time.

Now RMTProtect has introduced a new product designed to help families manage following a diagnosis of female cancer.

Female Cancer Cover pays £25,000 on first diagnosis of any of the seven covered female specific cancers (see opposite), cash which can be spent however it's needed - use it to pay the household bills for a while, for extra childcare, help around the house and to help with transport costs to and from appointments.

There's also emotional support from a specialist support line staffed by registered nurses qualified to provide information, advice and arrange counselling. Cover starts 90 days after taking out the policy.

Just go to our page RMTProtect.com/female to get a quote or call 0800 033 4184* - one of our friendly customer services team will be happy to help.

How it works...

- £25,000 cash benefit payable on first diagnosis of cancer in the following organs:
 - one or both breasts
 - one or both Fallopian tubes
 - one or both ovaries
 - the cervix
 - the uterus
 - the vagina
 - the vulva
- or carcinoma in situ of the breast (early stage cancer which hasn't spread)
- £2,500 on first diagnosis of carcinoma in situ in any covered female organs other than the breast
- £50 for each inpatient visit, as a direct result of the first diagnosis of a covered cancer, up to a maximum of £4,500
- £25 for each outpatient visit, as a direct result of the diagnosis of a covered cancer, up to a maximum of £1,000
- For UK residents aged 18- 69. No medical questions. Previously diagnosed cancers are not covered.
- Access to a specialist support line.

4 in 5 cancer sufferers are on average **£570 a month worse off**

£25,000 CASH PAYOUT

0800 033 4184
www.RMTPROTECT.com/female

RMT Protect is a trading name of Union Income Benefit Holdings Limited (UIB), which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, register number 307575. This can be checked on the FCA website www.fca.org.uk. RMT Protect Female Cancer Cover is sold and administered by UIB and underwritten by AIG Europe Limited. RMT Protect, Linton House, 39/51 Highgate Road, London, NW5 1RT. Tel: 0800 033 4184 www.RMTPROTECT.com *Macmillan Cancer's Hidden Price Tag report, 2013 †www.cancerresearchuk.org *Calls may be monitored or recorded.

REMEMBERING THE FALLEN

RMT assistant national secretary Mark Carden laid a wreath on behalf of the union on Remembrance Sunday at a memorial service in Trinity Square Gardens London which recognised the efforts of more than 40,000 UK merchant seafarers lost during two world wars and subsequent conflicts.

The centenary was marked of the loss of Cunard's flagship RMS Lusitania – torpedoed during the First World War and those lost during the fight against fascism.

"We all owe a great deal of gratitude to Merchant seafarers that sacrificed so much to keep this country fed during the Nazi onslaught and supplied the Soviet Union throughout the dark days of World War Two," he said.

The monument near Tower Hill station lists all those who died in those conflicts and lists the ships lost as well as the trawlers of fisherman that continued to work in order to feed Britain during the Second World War.



LONDON TO NEW YORK

Janine Booth explains how New York City's transport workers are fighting similar battles to RMT members

New York City's transit workers can retire with a full pension aged 55 after 25 years' employment and Transport Workers' Union president John Samuelson describes their defined-benefit scheme as 'a "forever" benefit worth its weight in gold.

"We are ready to defend our hard-earned benefits," he says.

TWU Local 100 – the branch representing New York transit workers – is also campaigning to reduce the dangers of diesel exposure at work. Train operators' chair Steve Downs explains that this involves bus drivers, train and maintenance workers.

Last year TWU won the first successful claim to the Workers' Compensation Board establishing that diesel fumes exposure had caused lung cancer and the Local is demanding that diesel-powered vehicles and equipment are replaced with battery-powered alternatives.

After years as rank-and-file activists, John and Steve took up their elected posts in the Local in 2010 when the union faced big cuts to both bus and Subway (underground) services.

Steve says that the union was committed to campaigning alongside passengers and communities goes further:

"The Local is made up of people who live in the city and in neighbourhoods that don't have good services.

"It's not just 'let's do this to save our jobs', it's 'let's do this because it's important to our sense of what a fair city would look like,'" Steve says.

Since then, the Local has moved to more proactive campaigning, demanding extensions to services.

Steve explains that improving services are a key



issue for making public transit more accessible to disabled people: 'The Transit Authority is given money to make it more accessible. They've done a lot, including retro-fitting Subway stations with lifts; any buses bought in the last 20 years have wheelchair lifts on them; and so on.

The issue now is that you may be counting on a bus that has a wheelchair lift on it but there have been service cuts and now that bus is only coming every half hour instead of every ten minutes.'

As London Underground closes its ticket offices and plans to cut around 800 station staff, Steve confirms that there are similar threats to the New York Subway's station staffing: "Every station is staffed by at least one person in a booth and they are trying to cut that so that some stations would be unstaffed and just have an intercom," he says.

While the MTA uses new ticketing technology as a

pretext to cut station staffing, it is also using new signalling technology as a pretext to try to remove conductors (guards) from trains. In the 1990s, the union 'fought them to a standstill'.

"We were able to limit the damage to the arbitrator saying they could take the conductor off trains that were 300ft or less, which is half a train for us – our trains are 600ft'.

In October, the TWU announced another victory as the city authority agreed to provide \$2.6 billion towards funding the MTA's Capital Plan, to invest in improvements. TWU's campaign had included full-page newspaper adverts featuring the mayor operating a graffiti-covered subway train and jumping a turnstile.

As in London, TWU has also unionised the city's cycle hire scheme and the 200 workers got an immediate pay rise averaging 10 per cent, more predictable working hours, better benefits and working

conditions, an agreed discipline and grievance procedure and collective bargaining rights.

Central to their organising efforts has been a shop stewards' training programme, which Steve describes as "one of the best things we have done".

"It has helped to develop a core of about 1,000 people on the job that have been through that training over the last five years," he said.

Steve says that Local 100 is doing "pretty well" at involving black, female and minority members through active recruitment. Steve also deals effectively with any rare occasion on which people make sexist or other discriminatory comments in meetings: "I'm not particularly heavy-handed, but I'd say look that's unacceptable. It would be shut down straight away".

We may be thousands of miles apart, but transport workers face similar issues everywhere. ■

WIDOWS AND ORPHANS DAY OUT

Former RMT regional organiser Jim Stevenson arranged a day out for 20 families to spend the day in Brighton all funded by the London Widows and Orphan Fund summer raffle and sale of calendars and diaries.

LWOF president Mick Cash said that the fund was a lifeline

to members that had suffered a bereavement.

"I would encourage member to help with the important work of the LWOF if anyone wishes to buy our calendars and diaries to raise fund they are available from our south east regional office," he said.



LONDON ORPHAN FUND PRICE LIST AND ORDER FORM 2016

ITEM	PRICE	NUMBER REQUIRED
2016 Steam Traction Calendar	£7.00	
2016 Modern Traction (Diesel) Calendar	£7.00	
2016 L.W.O.F Diary (with free wallet & ticket holder if requested please indicate YES or NO)	£3.00	
LOFC/NUR Insignia Wallet	0.50p	
LOFC/NUR Multi Ticket Wallet	0.50p	
RMT LOFC - Badge	£2.50	
LOFC Red/Green X Flag Badge	£2.00	
RMT ORPHAN FUND X FLAG TIE (Black)	£5.00	
LWOF - Blue Tie	£5.00	
	Total cost of goods ordered =	
	TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED=	

Please provide the following information:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:.....

Branch:

Home Tel :

Mobile:

Please return completed order form to:

Stewart Cameron
C/O RMT/SERO
RMT Unity House
39 Chalton Street
London
NW1 1JD

GOLD FOR RFA CHEFS

A team of four Royal Fleet Auxiliary chefs plus one Royal Marine took on the might of the Royal Air Force and Army teams to win joint gold medal in the Blue Ribbon Open Team Buffet competition.

The RMT members from the RFA are part of the naval services Culinary Arts Team and chefs from all three services showed off their skills and competed for medals ranging from a certificate of merit, bronze silver and Gold. Gold is the Holy Grail as not many are awarded.

The themed menus were devised by RFA staff including leading hand Shane Rixon with assistant chef Mark Reed, leading hand Tom o' Conner and CPO Matt Rowberry. They were joined by and Royal Martine Sargent Tristan Merrick.

The boys got together a week before the event to practice dishes and refine their menu and then worked through the night and transported their



culinary fare to RAF Shrivenham, outside Swindon all the way from HMS Raleigh in Cornwall.

They arrived at 0530 and had to set up the table for 0800 and then wait and try to relax until the international judges finished marking.

At the awards ceremony the lads found out that they had been awarded a Gold Medal narrowly missing out to the RAF by two points for the best in class.

The team can be very proud of their achievements considering the size of the RFA

compared to the other services and winning one of only two gold medals awarded to the naval services team.

So a big well done to Shane, Mark, Tom and Matt from the RFA and of course to their colleague in the Royal Marines, Tristan. ■

LEARNING AT SEA

RMT Learning went out on the high seas recently as learning officer Paul Shaw visits Dover to connect with Learners from the port, DFDS and P&O Ferries.

He invited some providers to join him from East Kent College and the Marine Society and Sea Cadets.

A great deal of interest has been shown in opportunities being organised at Dover Maritime House such as BSL and IT courses. Also they have been promoting Maths at Sea and online portal for improving maths standards and the Slater Foundation who provide financial support to seafarers who want to study courses of a maritime nature.

RMT learning officer Karen Skelly was also on board to speak to members about becoming Union Learning reps on their ships. She met up with ULRs Mark Stannard and Alicja Szostak to catch up with their work and offer support and advice.

Learning officer Petrit Mihaj spoke to learners and ULRs about the potential for Learning Agreements and how they can support and sustain ULR activity within a workplace.

Although members get down time on board many find it very hard to study on-line as the crew wi-fi has a very weak signal and they struggle to even use it for browsing.

Discussions were held with



Karen Skelly showing ULR Alicja szostak the new e-pinkie function on her smart phone

ULRs about the potential for a campaign to get companies to upgrade their wi-fi if they are

serious about their staff learning and improving their skills. ■

LEEDS CITY AWARDS



Leeds City members were presented with long service awards by RMT president Peter Pinkney. Leeds City branch secretary John Stewart said that award winners were a mixture of 10, 25, and 40 year badges and medals.

"It was a very good turn-out of members and everyone had a great night," he said.

LETTERS

THANK YOU

I would like to say a big thank you to all the branches and members who supported me and voted for me in the Council of Executives elections.

I will work hard to support all members whether they voted for me or not. My aim will be to unify the region and to pursue policies that will take our members conditions forward. I will be available to attend meetings and I will give regular reports to members and branches.

Regards

Kathy Mazur

*Council of Executives
Committee Member (Region 10)*

AHOY OBAN!

RMT general secretary Mick Cash and national secretary Steve Todd presented Oban branch member Mick McArthur with a retirement gift and honorary life membership after 49 years membership.

"It is a pleasure to give Mick the send-off he deserves and, on behalf of the whole union, we wish you a long and restful retirement," said the general secretary.



NOTIFICATION OF CONTRIBUTION RATES FOR 2016

Like most things, the cost of providing you with the benefits of RMT membership increases every year and contribution rates increase to help us to maintain and improve those benefits and our services to members.

From the 1st January 2016 new members joining whose basic salary or equivalent earnings are above £20,700 per annum will pay £4.68 per week

New members whose basic salary or equivalent earnings are below £20,700 per annum will pay £2.02 per week

The transitional rates of £1.50 and £2.90 will remain at the same level until otherwise advised.

Direct debit payments will be amended accordingly as will contributions collected by employers under paybill deduction arrangements. Members who pay contributions to cash collectors will receive a new contribution card from the collector. Those sending cheques or postal orders direct will need to adjust the amounts sent in accordingly.

Period	Full Rate	Low Rate
Weekly	£4.68	£2.02
4 Weekly	£18.72	£8.08
Monthly	£20.28	£8.75

We maintain a tight control of our costs and continually re-examine them to ensure that we make best use of our resources to deliver improved services to you. I am sure you will agree that RMT membership continues to provide excellent value for money.

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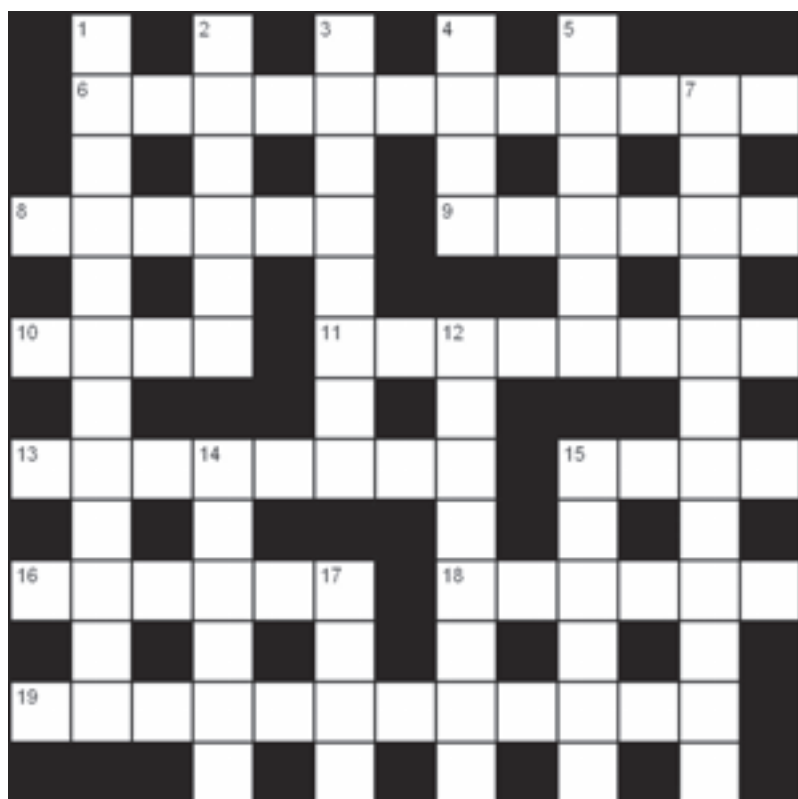
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rmtdrive.org.uk

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD



Last month's solution...



The winner of last month's prize crossword is Peter Townsend, Bristol.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by January 4 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.

ACROSS

- 6 Imperialist growth (12)
- 8 Secret (6)
- 9 On a vehicle (6)
- 10 Small land mass (4)
- 11 Lift (8)
- 13 Object (8)
- 15 Fish (4)
- 16 Unjust (6)
- 18 Duct (6)
- 19 Relating to flight (12)

DOWN

- 1 Protest (12)
- 2 Orb (6)
- 3 vehemently disliked (8)
- 4Zapata! (4)
- 5 Breed of pet (8)
- 7 Doable (12)
- 12 Interlude (8)
- 14 Attract (6)
- 15 Three times (6)
- 17 Quantity of paper (4)



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Finance Department, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

RMT CREDIT UNION APPLICATION FORM — please complete your application along with the attached Direct Debit.

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**.

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

Surname		Address	
Forename(s)			
Home phone			
Mobile phone		Postcode	
Email address			
Date of Birth		National Insurance Number	

2 **Marital Status** married ☐ partner ☐ single ☐ divorced ☐ **Drivers Licence No.**

3 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

4 **Mr** ☐ **Mrs** ☐ **Ms** ☐ **Miss** ☐

5 Membership Status

RMT TU Member ☐ Retired RMT TU Member ☐ RMT Family Member ☐

6 **How much do you wish to save £** This is the amount you wish to save by Direct Debit monthly on the 28th ☐ or date you next get paid weekly ☐ if 4 weekly (Fri) ☐ date here.....

7 Normally your payments are made once a month (28th) to RMT Credit Union Ltd.

8 **Next of Kin**

Address

.....
.....

9 **I undertake to abide by the rules now in force or those that are adopted.**

Your signature

Date

We are checking new member identification electronically. To do this, we now carry out searches with credit reference agencies who supply us with relevant detail including information from the Electoral Register. The searches will not be used by other lenders to assess your ability to obtain credit.

I agree to my identity being checked electronically ☐

If we cannot verify your identity and address by this method, we will ask you to provide paper documentation instead. Full details of these can be supplied to you by calling 020 7529 8835.



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Please fill in the whole form including official use box using a ball point pen and Send to: RMT Credit Union Ltd., 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

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This is not part of the the instruction to your Bank or Building Society.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

Please pay RMT Credit Union Ltd Direct Debits for the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with RMT Credit Union Ltd, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions from some types of account

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you seven working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If you request RMT Credit Union Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
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To add insult to injury we now find out that the new Hitachi Inter-City trains will need to be fitted with diesel engines due to electrification delays and that the taxpayer is facing a bill of **£3 million a week** for new trains that will be left idle.

This at the same time as jobs, safety and services remain under threat from cash-led cuts.

It is a scandal.

Journey times:-	1977 publicly owned British Rail*	2018 GWR after £4.5bn fleet investment**
London to Bristol Temple Meads	85 mins	90 mins
London to Cardiff	105 mins	113 mins
London to Swansea	163 mins	164 mins

* BR poster 1977 © NRM / Pictorial Collection / Science & Society Picture Library Image **May 2015 Building a Greater West 'Our new Great western Franchise' Publication

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